

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH  
BEING AN ADOLESCENT FATHER:  
COMPARING NATIVE AMERICANS  
TO WHITES AND OTHER MINORITIES

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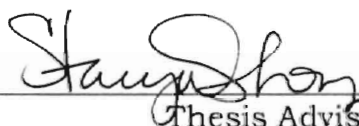
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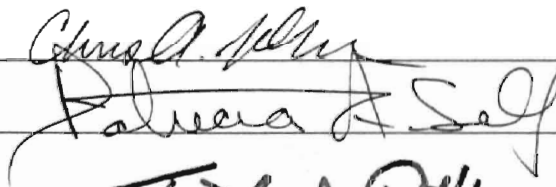
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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

In the United States adolescent pregnancies have decreased in recent years, however, we still have the highest adolescent pregnancy and childbearing rates of any industrialized country. Preliminary data for the National Center for Health Statistics (2000) show that more than 479,067 adolescents give birth every year, making up more than one-fifth of the annual births in the United States. In other words, just about every 31 seconds an adolescent becomes pregnant, and every two minutes an adolescent gives birth (Heights & Lambert, 1998). Sucoff and Upchurch (1998) found that minorities have a higher rate of premarital adolescent childbearing, than their White peers do. In regards to Native American youth, Moss (2003) reported that 66 out of every 1000 Native American births were from adolescent mothers. Even more alarming is that 41% of Native American females had their first child before the age of 20 as compared to 23% of all other adolescent mothers.

Most of the research regarding teen parenthood has been directed toward females. There has been relatively little attention paid to teen fatherhood. Researchers often exclude adolescent fathers in studies because they are harder to contact and recruit (Dallas & Chen, 1998). The research that has been conducted on adolescent fathers has primarily focused on three racial groups: African-Americans, Hispanics

and Whites, while relatively little attention has been focused on Native Americans.

It is important to look at fatherhood among Native American adolescents because very little research has been conducted within this group. As a result Native American adolescents are not represented in the literature.

### Purpose of Study

The literature suggests that race is a characteristic that is known to be a risk factor for adolescent fatherhood. More specifically, being a racial minority puts adolescent males at higher risk for adolescent fatherhood. However, no research to date has focused specifically on Native American adolescent fathers. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine four factors associated with premature fatherhood for Native American adolescent fathers as compared to other minority adolescent fathers (Black and Hispanic) and White adolescent fathers.

The factors in this study include the following : 1) family structure, 2) parental style, 3) income level, and 4) educational achievement

Risk factors are defined as “individual or environmental hazards that increase an individual’s vulnerability to negative developmental outcomes” (Small & Luster, 1994, p.182). A correlate is defined as an outcome of being an adolescent father

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The following review of literature includes information about adolescent fatherhood and four factors that will be the focus of the present study. The first section contains theoretical basis for the present study, followed by each of the factors: family structure, parental style, income level, and educational achievement.

#### Theoretical Background

Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory provides a guideline for the link between factors and Native American adolescent fatherhood.

#### Social Cognitive Theory

Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) stems from Social Learning Theory (SLT), which dates back to the 1800s. Albert Bandura began publishing work on SLT in the 1960s. This provided the foundation for his later publication of *Social Foundations of Thought and Action : A Social Cognitive Theory* (Bandura, 1986). In this work he studies the individual within a social or cultural context and focuses on how people perceive and interpret information they generate themselves (intrapersonal) and from others (interpersonal). The purpose of this theory is to understand and predict individual and group behavior. It also identifies methods by which a behavior can be modified or changed.

The model of causation is what Bandura founded Social Cognitive Theory on (Vasta, 1989). He contends that this model of human behavior is not unidirectional. It is triadic and involves: personal factors, behavior, and environmental influences, all of which operate bidirectionally. These three influences are not equally weighted and differ person to person (see Figure 1).

Vasta (1989) also states that within the model of causation people are neither driven by inner forces nor automatically shaped and controlled by their environment. However, they do function as contributors to their own behavior and development within a network of reciprocal interacting influences. Social Cognitive Theory characterizes people in terms of capabilities. The following are key capabilities within SCT: 1) Symbolizing Capability is how people process experiences by means of verbal or cognitive symbols into models that direct their judgment and actions. Symbols provide meaning to experiences they have had. 2) Vicarious Capability is the ability to learn, not only from personal experience but also through the observation of others. Humans learn and expand their knowledge by information conveyed by models. Television is an example of how people model behaviors of others and transcend it into their own environment. 3) Forethought Capability is a distinctive human attribute that allows a person the capability to anticipate likely consequences and plan a course of action that will produce beneficial outcomes. The capacity to regulate one's behavior

based on expectations is insightful behavior and this behavior is possible because of the ability to symbolize. 4) Self-Regulatory Capability is an internal control mechanism that governs what behavior is preformed. 5) Self-Reflective Capability is the ability to analyze personal experiences. One of the most important types of Self-reflection is Self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is how a person perceives his or her own abilities and characteristics that guide their behavior.

Application of Social Cognitive Theory to premature parenthood in Native American adolescents suggests that a Native American adolescent male, raised by a single mother might have a greater risk of becoming an adolescent parent. For example, consider a young Native American male being raised by a single, high school dropout adolescent mother who currently has a job and manages to make ends meet. This adolescent male might consider premature fatherhood and dropping out of school to be an option because his mother made that choice and she has been able to get by. He might not consider that there could be better alternatives for his future. Vasta (1989) defined this nature of action as vicarious and a type of observational learning. Vasta (1989) also proposed that structuring behavior by response outcomes serves as a silent way of informing observers of appropriate behavior. A limitation of this learning is that an observer might find a solution that is adequate but does not consider any other alternatives.

Social Cognitive Theory also suggests that an adolescent father who lives in poverty with parents who did not finish high school might have a different perspective educational achievement. In his household he may have learned inappropriate interpersonal skills such as, aggression and poor communication skills, which are essential for school achievement. As a result, he may not perceive himself as having any positive life options. Therefore he does not give priority to education and does not avoid barriers such as premature parenthood that could inhibit future endeavors. Supporting this, Hudley (2001) suggests that low income African-American and Latino youth are more likely to experience high rates of school drop-out due to poor interpersonal skills.

In conclusion, Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) provides several points of validation for the present study. By evaluating interpersonal skills and observational learning, two characteristics of Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), we can better facilitate programs to promote positive Native American adolescent development.

#### Factors for Adolescent Fatherhood

The majority of studies on adolescent fathers do not consider how characteristics differ for Native Americans as compared to Hispanic, African-American and White males. Because there is little information in this area, the literature reviewed for this paper, will include race and four other factors associated with adolescent fatherhood (parental style, income level, family structure and educational achievement).

### Race.

Race is a key factor when looking at adolescent fatherhood.

Ramirez-Valles, Zimmerman, and Newcomb (1998) conducted face-to-face interviews with 2,000 ninth-graders from four public high schools in Michigan. African-American and White adolescents were selected because they represented about 95% of the population in the high schools. They examined the precursors associated with early sexual activity. Their results indicated that sexual activity among adolescent minorities has been steadily increasing since the 1970's and that race, family structure and poverty were mediators for early youth sexual activity. Brewster (1993) suggested that premarital intercourse and pregnancy are higher among Black adolescents than White.

Hendricks' (1988) cross-sectional study of 11 Anglo, 14 Black and 31 Hispanic urban teenage fathers looked at several independent variables that included father's age at birth of child, age of first coital experience, family size, presence of father in home, sisters and brothers who are unwed parents, years completed in school, employment status and active church membership. Hendricks (1988) concluded that 55% of Anglo fathers sampled had their earliest coital experience at age 15 or older. In addition, 68% of Hispanic and 79% of Black fathers reported their earliest coital experience at age 14 or younger, with 50% of the Black fathers having had their first coital experience by age 12.



The majority of the studies examined, conclude that being of minority race is a factor in premature fatherhood. However, what is lacking in the current research is the inclusion of Native American adolescent fathers. White, Black and Hispanic adolescent fathers are the only races examined, and there are no current studies that include Native American adolescent fathers.

#### Family Structure.

Being in a single parent family is another component of family structure that can increase the odds of adolescent parenthood. Breslin (1998) analyzed data from a 1987 longitudinal study of 506 Pennsylvania youth that covered a wide range of questions including behaviors, attitudes, relationships, school achievement and demographics. Half of the participants in the sample were White and the other half were Black. Using data from the first five years of the sample, Breslin (1998) concluded that young men who live in single-parent families have a higher association with adolescent fatherhood. Day, Paaqsch, Carver and Call (1998) analysis is based on the data from the NLSY79. They examined Black and White youth and also found that mothers who raise their children alone have fewer financial resources, have less education and are less likely to effectively monitor activities of their children outside the home.

Thornberry, Smith and Howard (1997) examined data from the Rochester Youth Development study to determine early risk factors for

premature fatherhood. The sample included, 121 White, 386 African-American, and 108 Hispanic youth. One of the risk factors found to have a high association with adolescent fatherhood was being raised in a female-headed household. Thornberry et. al. (1997) concluded there was a high correlation between parental support and the postponement of sexual activity. As a result, single parents tend to show lower levels of support simply because they have a limited amount of time and energy to devote to their children.

Barnett (1997) suggests that African-American youth who come from single parent households and live in poverty have the greatest risk of becoming adolescent parents. Flewelling and Bauman's (1990) research examined a two-year prospective study of 2,102 young white and non-white adolescents in ten southeastern cities. Their results found a significant association between father absence and early involvement in sexual activity in both white and non-white boys and girls 12 to 18 years old.

Whitbeck, Yoder, Hoyt and Conger (1999) utilized a sample that included 457 rural European American adolescents in grades 8-10 from two-parent and single-mother families. They discovered that one of the most fundamental predictors of early sexual intercourse for male rural European American adolescents is to come from single-parent families (Dearden, Hale and Wooley 1995). also found similar evidence while studying teenage fatherhood in Great Britain. They examined

longitudinal data from the National Child Development Study, which followed predominately White children born in Great Britain between March 3<sup>rd</sup> and March 9<sup>th</sup> in 1958. Data was collected at birth and at ages 7, 11, 16, and 23. According to their findings, family structure can influence the age at which an adolescent becomes sexually active thus leading to premature fatherhood. In addition children who live in stepfamilies had higher chance of becoming an adolescent father in the Dearden, Hale and Wooley (1995) study.

Downey, Ainsworth-Darnell and Dufur (1998) looked at a representative sample of adolescents from the 1990 wave of the National Education Longitudinal study and the General Social Surveys. From this data they established that single, female headed households tend to have lower incomes, educational levels, and a high percentage are of minority status than two-parent households. Downey et. al. (1998) also suggest that children who live in a single-mother headed household have more deviant behavior problems (adolescent parenthood, drug use and getting along with other peers) and the mothers often have more difficulty controlling their children.

Virtually every study examined cited minority single-parent households as a factor in adolescent parenthood. Additionally, many of the studies indicated that single-parent mother-headed households, put adolescent males at greater risk of becoming parents.

## Parental Style

In the last fifty years, research has shown a strong correlation between parental style and adolescent development. Parish and McCluskey (1992) surveyed 123 college students enrolled in a large Midwestern university. The students were asked to rate the restrictiveness versus permissiveness of each parent during their adolescence. According to their results Parish and McCluskey (1992) found that authoritative parents provide firm boundaries as well as high levels of warmth as a result they tend to have children who are self-confident, and less likely to be involved in deviant acts.

Kandel (1990) reviewed data from a representative sample of 1,222 adolescents enrolled in grades 10 and 11 in New York State public high schools. The different races of the adolescents sampled was not included in the methods section. However, Kandel's (1990) study, she determined that authoritarian parents have high levels of control, low levels of warmth, and generally have children who are more likely to participate in delinquent acts. Permissive parents on the other hand provide warmth, but set no limits and they also have children who engage in delinquent acts. Pardeck and Pardeck (1998) also note that permissive parents are not considered a source of support for the adolescent and they tend to turn towards peer groups for support and influence.

Moore et. al. (2000) reviewed the recent research regarding adolescent sexual behavior and interventions programs aimed at

reducing adolescent pregnancy. Their report indicates adolescents who live in single-parent households tend to have earlier onset of sexual behavior. This finding reflects several factors including lower family incomes, disadvantaged neighborhoods, less supervision and more permissive parenting styles by single-parents.

The current research suggest, non-authoritative (permissive, uninvolved and authoritarian) parents are more likely to have children who engage in deviant acts, such as, early onset of sexual behavior, which in turn can lead to premature fatherhood.

### Income Level

Findings from the National Center for Children in Poverty (1996) indicate that there is a direct connection between poverty level and pregnancy rates in minority communities. Adolescents who are raised in poverty and who have parents with minimal education have higher rates of pregnancy than do adolescents who live in higher income households.

Felice, Feinstein, Fisher and Kaplan (1999) found similar evidence in their review of the current literature. Gathering data from the last ten years of research on White, Black, and Hispanic pregnant and parenting adolescents led the authors to make some new observations. They concluded that pregnant and parenting adolescents are more likely to live in poverty and have repeated pregnancies from one generation to the next. In particular, adolescent fathers are more likely than their peers to have limited financial resources and low income potential. Research by

Winstanley, Meyers and Florsheim (2002) also examined family socioeconomic status (SES) with 59 African American, Hispanic Americans, and White adolescent fathers-to-be and found that family income is a factor associated with adolescent childbearing. Many families with low household incomes live in high- risk areas, and as a result, are negatively affected by the financial situation.

Brewester, Billy and Grady (1993) sampled 1,511 non-black women age twenty or younger, who had reached menarche after their twelfth birthday and were sexually active. They proposed that sexually active adolescent females with low socioeconomic status (SES) are not as likely to have parents with high expectations for school success and college plans, as compared to parents from higher-SES communities.

Sucoff and Upchurch (1998) investigated neighborhood racial composition and poverty among 940 metropolitan African-Americans and found that poor minority neighborhoods do not discourage premarital sex and as a result they experience a high number of premarital adolescent pregnancies.

Finally, Wyatt (1997) examined current research regarding the development of young males and states that chronic poverty and instability in family life are some reasons why young males gravitate towards peers and adolescent females. Wyatt (1997) also suggested that young males use sex as an escape mechanism to get away from family,

which in turn can lead to premature fatherhood and early exposure to sexually transmitted diseases.

In summary, the current research states a connection between race, poverty and premature parenthood. Minority adolescent fathers in particular, are more likely than their peers to have been raised in poor households.

### Educational Achievement

Academic achievement is another factor connected in recent literature to adolescent fatherhood. In Thornberry et. al. (1997) study of White, Black and Hispanic youth the authors discovered that adolescents with poor school achievement and low aspirations for school, have higher dropout rates which is associated with teen fatherhood.

In addition Fagot, Pears, Capaldi, Crosby and Leve (1998) looked at the precursors of adolescent pregnancy from the Oregon Youth Study (OYS). The OYS sampled 206 at risk males between 10 and 18 years of age. The evidence from this study states that the strongest predictor of adolescent fatherhood was the young males' poor academic performance.

According to Whitbeck et. al. (1999) adolescents who do better academically, are highly involved in extracurricular activities, have college aspirations and were more apt to delay becoming sexually active. Ramirez-Valles, Zimmerman and Newcomb (1998) suggest White and Black youth that engage in church and school activities refrain from

early sexual behavior, because they have social networks that encourage staying in school and discourage pre-marital activity.

In summary, the current research suggest that low levels of educational achievement is a factor for minority adolescent fatherhood in particular for adolescents who drop out of school.



## Correlates of Adolescent Fatherhood

### Educational Achievement.

Nock (1998) examined the first 15 years of the National Longitudinal Study of Youth, a sample of young men and women between the ages of fourteen and twenty-one in 1979. Nock (1998) found that additional outcomes of premarital fatherhood include men who drop out of school, but also are charged with more crimes, and more likely to be unemployed. Similarly, Felice et. al. (1999) observation of current research found that adolescent fathers are more likely to be high school dropouts and have poorer academic outcomes than adolescents who are not fathers.

Kost (1997) examined the effects of educational, employment and psychosocial support services that were provided to adolescent fathers between September 1990 and June 1995 in the Fathers Forever Program in Buffalo, New York. Kost (1997) concluded that youth who become fathers during adolescence are more likely to drop out of high school and in turn have higher levels of unemployment

Hendricks (1988) also found a difference between the races in the number of years of school completed. Seventy-nine percent of Black adolescent fathers were more likely to have completed 12 or more years of school as compared to 27% of Anglo and 29% of Hispanic fathers.

The level of education achieved among adolescent fathers tends to be lower than their non-parenting peers. Pirog-Good's (1996) study was

based on data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Labor Market Experience-Youth Cohort (NLSY). The NLSY is composed of a representative sample of 6,403 young men who were between the ages of 14 to 19 in 1979. The participants were interviewed annually up through 1988. According to Pirog-Good's (1996) results, adolescent fathers acquire less education and fewer high school diplomas than their non-parenting counterparts. This result was significant for all races. However, Black adolescent fathers were more likely than adolescent fathers of any other race to receive high school credentials. This is attributed to the Black fathers' faith in the benefits of education, even with disappointing rewards of education for them in the labor market. Additionally, it should be noted that Black adolescents who are not fathers are less likely than other races to complete high school. For the adolescent fathers who did graduate from high school, they graduated at later ages than their non-parenting peers.

Anthony and Smith (1994) conducted research at a high school in Denver, Colorado with a student population of 1,000. The racial make-up consisted of 74% Black, 13% White, 8% Hispanic and 1% Native American. Twenty-eight parenting adolescents (20 mother and 8 fathers) voluntarily participated in a teenage parent program. The program provided both individual and group counseling and was considered successful by participants and staff. Seven of the fathers completed the school year and the average grade point improved from a 2.07 to 2.17.

The services provided to these adolescent parents were believed to have given the participants the extra support needed to stay in school and increase academic achievement.

In sum, the current research on educational achievement as a correlate suggest that minority adolescent fathers tend to have lower levels of educational achievement and higher rates of deviant behavior.

In conclusion, this study will contribute to the research on factors for adolescent fatherhood by analyzing data from an underrepresented group, Native Americans as compared to Black, Hispanic and White adolescent fathers. By identifying factors associated with Native American adolescent fatherhood we can gain greater insight into what life experiences lead to increased vulnerability for premature fatherhood. As well as how factors for Native American adolescent fathers differ from factors of other minority (Black and Hispanic) adolescent fathers and White adolescent fathers.

### Hypothesis 1

A. Native American adolescent fathers will be just as likely to have been raised in single-parent mother-only households as compared to other minority (Black and Hispanic) adolescent fathers.

B. Native American adolescent fathers will be more likely to have been raised in single-parent mother-only households as compared to White adolescent fathers.

## Hypothesis 2

A. Native American adolescent fathers will be just as likely to have been raised in households with uninvolved, permissive or authoritarian parents as compared to other minority (Black and Hispanic) adolescent fathers.

B. Native American adolescent fathers will be more likely to have been raised in households with uninvolved, permissive or authoritarian parents as compared to White adolescent fathers.

## Hypothesis 3

A. Native American adolescent fathers will be just as likely to have been raised in households at or below the poverty level as compared to other minority (Black and Hispanic) adolescent fathers.

B. Native American adolescent fathers will be more likely to have been raised in households at or below the poverty level as compared to White adolescent fathers.

## Hypothesis 4

A. Native American adolescent fathers will be just as likely to have dropped out of high school as compared to other minority (Black and Hispanic) adolescent fathers.

B. Native American adolescent fathers will be more likely to have dropped out of high school as compared to White adolescent fathers.

The factors examined include: type of family structure, type of parental style, level of family income (poverty status), and level of

educational achievement (high school dropout). The independent variable is the adolescent father's race. More specifically, Native American adolescent fathers will be first compared with other minority adolescent fathers (Blacks and Hispanic) and then compared to White adolescent fathers.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODS

The data for this study were generated from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1997, round 3 cohort (NLSY97). The NLSY97 is among the latest information compiled by the National Longitudinal Surveys (NLS). The NLS is a part of a program developed by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), who originally sponsored the NLS to gather information on the labor market from four representative cohorts of men and women over different periods of time. The four original cohorts consisted of: older men 45 to 59 years of age; mature women 30 to 44 years of age; young men 14 to 24 years of age and young women 14 to 24 years of age.

In 1997, the NLS began a new longitudinal study of young men and women. The new survey was drawn out of a representative sample of young men and women ages 12-16 and was labeled the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1997 (NLSY97). The first round of interviews were conducted in early fall of 1997, the second round took place in the fall of 1998, the third round in the fall of 1999 and subsequent interviews are scheduled to occur on a yearly basis each fall. The NLSY continues today and follows the progression of young men and women as they continue their education, begin work, and make relationship decisions.

An interviewer, through a computer-assisted personal interview system (CAPI), collected the NLSY97 data. There is a set of checks implemented into the CAPI that lowers the probability of inconsistent data. The NLSY97 also used an audio computer-assisted self-interview.

### Research Design

The purpose of the current study is to examine the 3<sup>rd</sup> round of the NLSY97 survey and explore links that could be connected to fatherhood among Native American adolescents. By identifying specific risk factors that are antecedents to premature fatherhood we may be able to develop prevention programs for youth that are considered to be at risk.

### Measurement

There were 8,984 men and women participants in the NLSY97 round 3 cohort that was collected in the fall of 1999. They ranged in age from 14 to 19 years (as of December 31, 1999). This sample, included 309 adolescent fathers (see Table 1). An adolescent father was defined as a male participant who was a father at age nineteen or under. "Age at first birth" was the item used to determine participant's age at which they became a father. The adolescent father sample included 47.5% White (n=151), 28.3% Black (n=90), 11.6% Hispanic (n=37), 9.7% Native American (n=31), 2.5% Asian or Pacific (n=8) and .3 % something else (n=1). The Asian or Pacific and something else participants were excluded because of their small numbers in the sample.

Race. In order to measure race the item "Respondents Key Race" was used in the NLSY97 round 3 (1999). Respondents were asked to choose with which race they most closely identified. The options were '1= White', '2= Black or African American', '3= American Indian, Eskimo or Aleut', '4= Asian or Pacific Islander', '5= Hispanic', or '6= Something else'. Asian Pacific Islander and Something else were excluded from the study due to their small case size.

Family Structure. Family structure was assessed by determining if the respondents lived in a single family home with their mother only. Family Structure were assessed by the item "Does respondent live with mother figure only?". Participants were asked to answer 1 = yes or 0 = no. Of the 309 participants 85 participants lived with a mother figure only and 244 did not live with a mother figure only.

Parenting Style. Parenting Style was measured by using one item from the NLSY97 (round 3, 2000). Participants were asked to describe their mother and fathers' parenting style using four options, with 1 = authoritative, 2 = permissive, 3 = uninvolved, and 4 = authoritarian. For the purpose of this research a new variable was computed to compare authoritative parents to the other parenting styles (permissive, 1= authoritative and 2 = non-authoritative (permissive, uninvolved, and authoritarian). The literature regarding parenting styles in the present study generally looked at permissive, authoritarian and uninvolved as a group. The total population of adolescent fathers who rated their



mothers and fathers parenting style was 297, with 166 rating their parents as non-authoritative and 131 as authoritative.

Income Level. In order to determine if the adolescents were living in poverty, the NLSY97 (round 3, 2000) administered a questionnaire to the parents of the adolescents who were asked to give their gross household income and the number of people within their household for the year 2000. The measure was coded with 1 = at or below poverty level for 2000 and 0 = above poverty level for 2000. Of the 309 participants 249 were above the poverty level and 60 were at or below it.

Educational Achievement. Educational Achievement was assessed by using 1 item from the NLSY97 (round 3, 2000). The participants were asked if they were a high school dropout "yes" or "no". The scale was scored with a score of 0 = no and 1 = yes. Of the 308 participants, 24 were dropouts and 284 were not.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

#### Analyses

Descriptive data from the study are presented first and followed by Chi-square analysis that tested the statistical significance of the relationship between the factors and the race of the adolescent fathers (see Tables 2 & 3).

The participant field was narrowed down from 8,984 to 309 by choosing only those who were male and were an adolescent parent. Descriptive data were computed by running cross-tabulations for income level, educational achievement, parenting style, and family structure by adolescent's race (refer to Table 1). Chi-square analyses were then used in order to evaluate the statistical significance between races and the four factors (income level, educational achievement, parenting style and family structure).

#### Descriptive analyses

Race. The total number of participants by race included: 10% Native American (n=31), 48.7% White (n=151), 29% Black (n=90), and 11.9% Hispanic (n=37) with a total sample of 309.

Family Structure. Out of the 309 adolescent fathers sampled, 19.4% of Native Americans (n=6), 25.8% of Whites (n=39), 31.1% of Blacks (n=28), and 32.4% of Hispanics (n=12) responded that they lived with their mothers only.

Parenting Style. Out of the 297 participants who responded to this question, 166% rated their parents parenting style as non-authoritative, (which included permissive, uninvolved, and authoritarian types). Approximately 48.3% were Native American (n=14) 60 % were White (n=87), 46.5% were Black (n=40), and 69.5% were Hispanic (n=25).

Income Level. A total of 60 participants, out of 309, were considered at or below poverty level for 2000, with 9.7% Native American (n=3) were at or below poverty level compared to 9.9% White (n=15), 31.1% Black (n=28), and 37.8% Hispanic (n=14).

Educational Achievement. A total of 24 out of 308 participants were high school dropouts. Approximately 6.5% of them were Native American (n=2) as compared to 5.3% were White (n=8), 12.2% were Black (n=11), and 8.1% were Hispanic (n=3).

### Chi-Square Analyses

#### Hypothesis 1.

A. Native American adolescent fathers will be just as likely to have been raised in single-parent mother-only households as compared to other minority (Black and Hispanic) adolescent fathers. The computed value of the Chi-square ( $X^2(1)=1.78$ ,  $p=.182$ ) determined there was not a significant relationship between Native American adolescent fathers raised in a single-parent mother-only household as compared to other minority (Black and Hispanic) adolescent fathers.

B. Native American adolescent fathers will be more likely to have been raised in single-parent mother-only households as compared to White adolescent fathers. The computed value of the Chi-square ( $X^2(1)=.579$ ,  $p=.447$ ) determined there was not a significant relationship between Native American adolescent fathers raised in a single-parent mother-only household as compared to White adolescent fathers.

### Hypothesis 2.

A. Native American adolescent fathers will be just as likely to have been raised in households with uninvolved, permissive or authoritarian parents as compared to other minority (Black and Hispanic) adolescent fathers. The results of the Chi-square analysis ( $X^2(1)=.235$ ,  $p=.628$ ) determined there was not a significant relationship between Native American adolescent fathers raised households with uninvolved, permissive or authoritarian parents as compared to other minority (Black and Hispanic) adolescent fathers.

B. Native American adolescent fathers will be more likely to have been raised in households with uninvolved, permissive or authoritarian parents as compared to White adolescent fathers. The results of the Chi-square analysis ( $X^2(1)=.1.269$ ,  $p=.260$ ) determined there was not a significant relationship between Native American adolescent fathers raised in households with uninvolved, permissive or authoritarian parents as compared to White adolescent fathers.

### Hypothesis 3.

A. Native American adolescent fathers will be just as likely to have been raised in households at or below the poverty level as compared to other minority (Black and Hispanic) adolescent fathers. The results of the Chi-square analysis ( $X^2(1)=6.695$ ,  $p=.010$ ) determined there was a significant relationship between Native American adolescent fathers raised in households at or below the poverty level as compared to other minority (Black and Hispanic) adolescent fathers.

B. Native American adolescent fathers will be more likely to have been raised in households at or below the poverty level as compared to White adolescent fathers. The results of the Chi-square analysis ( $X^2(1)=.002$ ,  $p=.965$ ) determined there was not a significant relationship between Native American adolescent fathers raised in households with uninvolved, permissive or authoritarian parents as compared to White adolescent fathers.

### Hypothesis 4.

A. Native American adolescent fathers will be just as likely to have dropped out of high school as compared to other minority (Black and Hispanic) adolescent fathers. Appropriate statistical analysis could not be completed due to the small sample size of Native Americans ( $n=2$ ).

B. Native American adolescent fathers will be more likely to have dropped out of high school as compared to White adolescent fathers. Appropriate statistical analysis could not be completed due to the small sample size of Native Americans ( $n=2$ ).

Using data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1997, this study sought to better understand four factors associated with premature fatherhood for Native American adolescents as compared to other minority (Black and Hispanic) and White adolescent fathers. These relationships were investigated by Chi-square analysis.

Hypothesis 1 (a) of the present study proposed that Native American adolescent fathers would be just as likely to have been raised in a single-family mother-headed household as compared to other minority (Black and Hispanic) adolescent fathers. Flewelling and Bauman (1990) found a strong association between single-parent households and early sexual activity among non-white boys. The results of the present study failed to indicate a significant difference in the proportion of Native American adolescent fathers being raised in single-parent mother-only households as compared to other minority (Black and Hispanic) adolescent fathers.

Hypothesis 1 (b) proposed that Native American adolescent fathers would be more likely to have been raised in single-parent mother-only households than White adolescent fathers. Previous research from Barnett (1997) concluded that one of the most fundamental precursors of early sexual activity for adolescent males is being of minority race and

coming from single family homes. However, in regards to the present study there was not a significant difference found between the two races. Native American adolescent fathers were not more likely to have been raised in single-parent mother-only households as compared to White adolescent fathers.

Hypothesis 2 (a) proposed that Native American adolescent fathers would be just as likely to have been raised in non-authoritative (permissive, uninvolved or authoritarian) households as compared to other minority (Black and Hispanic) adolescent fathers. Moore et. al.(2000) stated that adolescents who live with authoritarian or permissive parents have an earlier onset of sexual behavior, which can lead to premature parenthood. The results of the present study did not indicate a significant difference in the proportion of Native American adolescent fathers being raised in non-authoritative (permissive, uninvolved and authoritarian) households as compared to other minority (Black and Hispanic) adolescent fathers.

Hypothesis 2 (b) stated that Native American adolescent fathers were more likely to have been raised in non-authoritative (permissive, uninvolved and authoritarian) households as compared to White adolescent fathers. Kandel (1990) reported that authoritarian and permissive parents generally produce children that are more likely to be involved in risky behaviors which include premature sex. However, in regards to the present study there was not a significant difference found



between the two races. Native American adolescent fathers were not more likely to have been raised in non-authoritative (permissive, uninvolved and authoritarian) households as compared to White adolescent fathers.

Hypothesis 3(a) proposed that Native American adolescent fathers would be just as likely to have been raised in households at or below the poverty level as compared to other minority (Black and Hispanic) adolescent fathers. The National Center for Children in Poverty (1996) found a direct connection between poverty level and increased levels of pregnancy rates in particularly among African American and Hispanic minorities. The findings of the present study also indicated a significance difference between Native American adolescent fathers and other minority (Black and Hispanic) adolescent fathers. Native American adolescent fathers were less likely to live at or below poverty level than other minority (Black and Hispanic) adolescent fathers.

Hypothesis 3(b) indicated that Native American adolescent fathers would be more likely to have been raised in households at or below the poverty level as compared to White adolescent fathers. Winstanley, Meyers and Florsheim (2002) found similar evidence when they examined family socioeconomic status in a sample of 59 African Americans and Hispanic Americans, and White adolescent fathers-to-be. Despite strong indicators from previous research the current study did not find a significant difference. Native American adolescent fathers were not more

likely to have been raised in households at or below the poverty level as compared to White adolescent fathers.

Hypothesis 4 (a) and (b) could not be interpreted, due to a small sample size of Native Americans. Therefore, there is no interpretation available for Hypothesis 4 (a) and (b).

In conclusion, it should be noted that the majority of the results of the study were not consistent with findings from prior research. This could be a result of the sample size or other factors associated with Native American adolescent fatherhood than were examined in the present study.

#### Limitations to the Present Study

The National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1997 (NLSY97), is a nationally representative sample with a great amount of information about its 8,984 participants. Despite the large sample size, only 309 of the 8,984 participants were adolescent fathers. Out of the 309 fathers sampled, 31 were of Native American descent. As a result of the extremely small sub-sample and the lack of tribal affiliation data the findings can not be generalized to the rest of the Native American population.

#### Further Considerations

There is a vast amount of research regarding adolescent pregnancy but the majority of it involves adolescent mothers. There is relatively little information available regarding adolescent fathers, in particular

Native American adolescent fathers. Future research should consider doing qualitative research with adolescent fathers from a variety of different Native American tribes to get a more accurate portrayal of what the factors are for these youth. Oklahoma would be an optimal place to conduct the research due to the large Native American population

#### Implications for Further Research

Implications for research on Native American adolescent fathers might include, but not limited to: Tribal agencies, teachers, parent educators, and others who have a vested interest in reducing adolescent pregnancy rates among Native American youth. The lack of current data indicates that there is a need for additional research in relation to Native American people. Future research in this area should utilize data from a representative sample of Native Americans. This type of research would help aid professionals in the development of appropriate pregnancy prevention programs for both male and female Native American youth.

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## Appendix 1

### Figure

Figure 1. Model of Causation

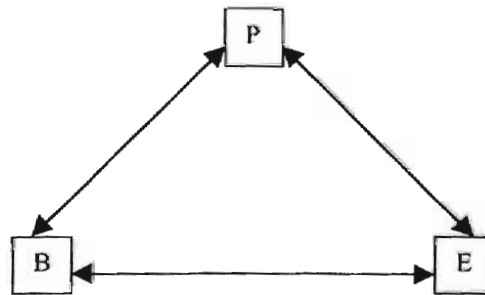


Figure 1: *B* symbolizes behavior, *P* the cognitive, biological and other internal events; and *E* = the external environment.

## Appendix 2

### Tables

Table 1

*Number of Subjects on the Four Factors by Race*

| Risk Factor                | Native American | Hispanic | Black | White |
|----------------------------|-----------------|----------|-------|-------|
| Family structure           |                 |          |       |       |
| Single parent Mother only  | 6               | 12       | 28    | 39    |
| Two-parent                 | 25              | 25       | 62    | 112   |
| Parenting Style            |                 |          |       |       |
| Authoritative              | 15              | 11       | 46    | 59    |
| Non-authoritative          | 14              | 25       | 40    | 87    |
| Income Level               |                 |          |       |       |
| At or below poverty level  | 3               | 14       | 28    | 15    |
| Above poverty level        | 28              | 23       | 62    | 136   |
| Educational Achievement    |                 |          |       |       |
| A high school drop out     | 2               | 3        | 10    | 8     |
| Not a high school drop out | 29              | 34       | 80    | 143   |

Table 2

*Chi-square Results for Factors Related to Fatherhood Status for Native Americans as Compared to Other Minorities*

| Factor                     | Native American | Other Minorities | X <sup>2</sup> | P value |
|----------------------------|-----------------|------------------|----------------|---------|
| Family structure           |                 |                  |                |         |
| Single parent Mother only  | 6 (19%)         | 40 (31%)         | 1.78           | .182    |
| Two-parent                 | 25 (81%)        | 87 (69%)         |                |         |
| Total                      | 31              | 127              |                |         |
| Parenting Style            |                 |                  |                |         |
| Non- Authoritative         | 14 (49%)        | 65 (53%)         | .235           | .628    |
| Authoritative              | 15 (51%)        | 57 (47%)         |                |         |
| Total                      | 29              | 122              |                |         |
| Income Level               |                 |                  |                |         |
| At or below poverty level  | 3 (10%)         | 42 (33%)         | 6.695          | .010    |
| Above poverty level        | 28 (90%)        | 85 (67%)         |                |         |
| Total                      | 31              | 127              |                |         |
| Educational Achievement    |                 |                  |                |         |
| A high school drop out     | 2 (6%)          | 7 (5%)           |                |         |
| Not a high school drop out | 29 (94%)        | 120 (94%)        |                |         |
| Total                      | 31              | 127              |                |         |

Table 3

*Chi-square Results for Factors Related to Fatherhood Status for Native Americans as Compared to Whites*

| Factor                     | Native American | Whites    | X <sup>2</sup> | P value |
|----------------------------|-----------------|-----------|----------------|---------|
| Family structure           |                 |           |                |         |
| Single parent Mother only  | 6 (19%)         | 39 (25%)  | .579           | .447    |
| Two-parent                 | 25 (81%)        | 112 (74%) |                |         |
| Total                      | 31              | 151       |                |         |
| Parenting Style            |                 |           |                |         |
| Non- Authoritative         | 14 (49%)        | 87 (59%)  | 1.269          | .260    |
| Authoritative              | 15 (51%)        | 59 (40%)  |                |         |
| Total                      | 29              | 146       |                |         |
| Income Level               |                 |           |                |         |
| At or below poverty level  | 3 (10%)         | 15 (9%)   | .002           | .965    |
| Above poverty level        | 28 (90%)        | 136 (90%) |                |         |
| Total                      | 31              | 151       |                |         |
| Educational Achievement    |                 |           |                |         |
| A high school drop out     | 2 (6%)          | 3 (2%)    |                |         |
| Not a high school drop out | 29 (94%)        | 148 (98%) |                |         |
| Total                      | 31              | 151       |                |         |

VITA

#2

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